THE CHALLENGES OF INTEGRATION IN THE ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICAN STATES (ECOWAS): A CASE STUDY OF GHANA

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THIS DISSERTATION IS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON, IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

LEGON
MAY 2015
DECLARATION

I hereby declare that with the exception of duly acknowledged references, this dissertation is the result of an original research conducted by me under the supervision of Dr. Peace Medie and that no part of it has been submitted anywhere else for any other purpose.

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(SUPERVISOR)

DATE:……………………………..
DEDICATION

To my parents for their special love and support.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My first and foremost thanks go to the Almighty God for His divine grace, wisdom and enablement. My profound appreciation also goes to my supervisor, Dr. Peace Medie, whose professional guidance, comments and encouragement, greatly improved and ensured the completion of this research.

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Finally, I am also thankful to the Research Department of the MFA & R.I for the opportunity to pursue the course.
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<tr>
<td>APRM</td>
<td>African Peer Review Mechanism</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASEAN</td>
<td>Association of South East Asian Nations</td>
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<td>CBI</td>
<td>Cross Border Investment</td>
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<td>CEPS</td>
<td>Customs Excise and Preventive Service</td>
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<td>CET</td>
<td>Common External Tariff</td>
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<td>CPP</td>
<td>Convention People's Party</td>
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<td>EAC</td>
<td>East African Community</td>
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<td>EBID</td>
<td>ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development</td>
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<td>ECOMOG</td>
<td>ECOWAS Monitoring Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECOWAS</td>
<td>Economic Community of West African States</td>
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<td>EPA</td>
<td>Economic Partnership Agreement</td>
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<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<td>GPS</td>
<td>Ghana Police Service</td>
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<td>IGOs</td>
<td>Inter-Governmental Organisations</td>
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<td>LPA</td>
<td>Lagos Plan of Action</td>
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<tr>
<td>MDAs</td>
<td>Ministries, Departments and Agencies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>MFA &amp; RI</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration of Ghana</td>
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<td>MRU</td>
<td>Mano River Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>NCBWA</td>
<td>National Congress of British West African States</td>
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<td>NCCI</td>
<td>National Commission for Cooperation and Integration</td>
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<tr>
<td>OAU</td>
<td>Organisation of African Unity</td>
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<td>SADCC</td>
<td>Southern African Development Coordination Conference</td>
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<td>SCF</td>
<td>Stabilisation and Cooperation Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>United States of America</td>
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<td>USSR</td>
<td>Union Soviet Socialist Republics</td>
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<td>WACB</td>
<td>West African Central Bank</td>
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<td>WAEMU</td>
<td>West African Economic and Monetary Union</td>
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<td>WAMI</td>
<td>West African Monetary Institute</td>
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<td>WAMZ</td>
<td>West African Monetary Zone</td>
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<td>WTO</td>
<td>World Trade Organisation</td>
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ABSTRACT

The aspiration for greater economic development and political integration in the West African sub-region was actualized through the signing of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Treaty in Lagos on 28 May 1975 by fifteen (15) states of the sub-region. The treaty authorized member states in 1983, 1988 and 2002, to set up national units in order to facilitate the ECOWAS integration process, all of which have proved futile. In November 2010, a new regulation C/REG.24/11/10 on guiding principles on the operation of the National Units was initiated and is still under implementation by a couple of Member States. ECOWAS is arguably the first regional economic Community in Africa to consider the importance of effective management of regionalism at the national level. However, the capacity of the ECOWAS national level units poses a serious challenge to the integration process. Political commitment, education, approach to the integration process, inter-agency coordination, funding and resources of ECOWAS programmes have been particularly cited. Using a qualitative approach and relying on document analysis and expert interviews, the study examines the challenges that confront ECOWAS member states in the management of the integration process at the national level, using Ghana as a case study. The study found, among others, that while the ECOWAS has undertaken many regional integration measures, they yielded minimal results because inadequate National Units to coordinate and implement such efforts. It is thus recommended that national jurisdictions in the ECOWAS region create well-resourced institutions to drive the course of integration initiatives in the region.
CHAPTER ONE
RESEARCH DESIGN

1.1 Background to the Study

The past half-century has witnessed a tremendous leap towards regional economic cooperation and integration in the various regions of the world. In Africa, the aspiration for integration dates back to the late 1950s when Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, Ghana’s first president and the torchbearer of African independence, made it clear in his pan-Africanist crusade. In West Africa, the increase in global economic activities, especially trade, and the incapacity of global structures to ensure equity in international trade and development have created an unavoidable process of integration.¹ There are however various approaches to integration. Many scholars, including Woodrow Wilson, Winston Churchill, Kaiser Wilhelm, in the 1910’s and 1950’s, viewed the concept as political leaders coming together for a common good of their respective states in a collective effort. But according to Ernst Haas, integration is a:

process whereby political actors in several distinct national settings are persuaded to shift their loyalties, expectations, and political activities toward a new centre, whose institutions possess or demand jurisdiction over the pre-existing national states.²

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) was formed in 1975 as a means of accelerating the development of the sub-region. West African countries signed the treaty establishing ECOWAS in Lagos on May 28, 1975 and it became effective in June 1975 when the required number of countries ratified it. The Community is made up of fifteen countries with the membership comprising eight French, five English, and two Portuguese-speaking countries. The broad objectives of ECOWAS as contained in Article two of the treaty envisaged the promotion of:
Cooperation and development in virtually all fields of economic activity, particularly in the field of industry, transport, telecommunications, energy, agriculture, natural resources, commerce, monetary and financial questions, and on social and cultural matters, for the purpose of raising the standard of living of its people, of increasing and maintaining economic stability, of fostering closer relations among its members and contributing to the process and development of the African continent. Promotion and expansion of intra-Community trade is therefore the principal motive for the establishment of the Community.³

Even though the principal organs within the Community have been changing since its existence, the revised treaty has created eight institutions to oversee the implementation and administration of the programmes of the sub-regional group.⁴ The institutions are: the Authority of Heads of State and Government, the Council of Ministers; the 115-member Community Parliament; the Economic and Social Council; the Community Court of Justice; the Executive Secretariat; the Fund for Cooperation, Compensation, and Development; and Specialized Technical Commissions.⁵ These institutions are assigned special roles with specified degree of power.⁶ The Authority of Heads of State and Government is however the supreme organ.⁷ The West African integration process is a comprehensive agenda that touches on all facets of life including; political, social, cultural, and economic.⁸

ECOWAS has been described by S.K.B Asante, as the most ambitious, most visible and certainly most studied of the current experiments in regional integration in sub-Saharan Africa.⁹ However, the Community has been facing challenges that hinder the smooth and successful implementation of its programmes to enhance the integration process. The challenges of the Community are economic, social, political and, cultural.

The organization has been confronted with a lack of political commitment.¹⁰ This challenge has manifested in various ways including members states not making ECOWAS issues a priority in the national agenda, a lack of total commitment on the part of the ECOWAS
members states to the cherished goals of the Community and the poor participation of ministers of member states at the meetings of the all-important ECOWAS council of ministers, which is an essential policy organ of the Community. The Community is also faced with the challenge of funding. Projects and programmes of the organization are mostly funded by the contributions from the member states. This approach to funding has failed as members have either refused to pay on time, or occasionally or refused to pay at all. ECOWAS is also faced with the challenge of rationalizing the presence of the numerous Inter-Governmental Organisations (IGOs) operating within the sub-region. This is because the IGO’s have varied and overlapping mandates and programmes as well as opposing agenda’s which sometimes impede the integration process in the Community. The approach to the integration process is another obstacle to successful implementation of the programmes of the Community. This is because the emergence of sub groups like the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA) in the organization, affects the approach of the integration process since they pursue their own objectives.

Furthermore, S.K.B Asante has also raised concerns about the strength of the ECOWAS principal institutions. Strengths of the institutions are particularly a problem because the impact of these institutions on the effectiveness and success of the integration process remains crucial, since they exert a leadership role in stimulating movement towards the integration process. According to Mohammed Mubarik, the principal institutions which comprise the ECOWAS Commission, Community Parliament, Community Court of Justice and the ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development (EBID), pose challenges of different forms to the integration process.
From the discussion above, this research seek to understand how the ECOWAS institutions at the national level can coordinate the large and increasingly diverse number of conclusions and recommendations formulated within the ECOWAS integration scheme?

Although the idea of ECOWAS was spearheaded by Nigeria and Togo, the historical roots of pan-Africanism in West Africa that led to the creation of the Community are traced to the pan-Africanism activities of Ghanaian politicians of the early twentieth century through to the 1950s, who laid the foundation on which their successors including Ghana, built the ECOWAS institutions that were formally set up in May 1975. Since then, Ghana has been at the vanguard of West African regionalism while the Community has gone through transformations over the years to meet the rapidly changing economic landscape of the world. For this reason, this research will seek to determine how the ECOWAS national level institution in Ghana can coordinate and implement the large and increasingly diverse number of conclusions and recommendations formulated within the ECOWAS integration scheme.

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), through its eight institutions established under the revised treaty in 1993, makes decisions and oversees the implementation of its programmes and projects in the member states. It is arguably the first regional economic Community in Africa to consider the importance of effective management of regionalism at the national level. However, the problem of inadequate institutional structures at the national level still remains the fundamental challenge to the integration efforts. The national level institutional structures are supposed to be the link between ECOWAS institutions and the people as well as states who are the beneficiaries. This problem has the potential for the Community to lose its
credibility as a reference point for most of the other groups in the region. The study seeks to determine how ECOWAS institution in Ghana can coordinate the large and increasingly diverse number of conclusions and recommendations formulated within the ECOWAS integration scheme, to ensure the sustainability of the integration process. The study will endeavor to address the following questions: What is the capacity of the ECOWAS institution in Ghana? How important is the ECOWAS national level unit to the integration process?

1.3 Hypothesis

The ECOWAS unit in Ghana has the capacity to coordinate the large and increasingly diverse number of conclusions and recommendations formulated within the integration scheme.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are to find out:

- What is the capacity of the ECOWAS institution in Ghana?
- How important is the ECOWAS unit in Ghana to the integration process?

1.5 Rationale

Many ECOWAS protocols provide a legal and institutional framework and form the basis for higher and deeper levels of economic, political and social integration in the sub-region. Several challenges and problems do exist, including the coordination and implementation of ECOWAS decisions and policies contained in the protocols, which clearly falls within the ambit of the national governments and their institutions. In this regard, ECOWAS has great difficulty performing many basic functions required of an effective economic union. It does not serve as an
authoritative body as it is supposed to be. Furthermore, it has little political leverage and as such its promises and threats lack credibility. It is also incapable of pursuing coherent flexible and dynamic negotiations guided by an effective strategy. This study, therefore, seeks to determine how the ECOWAS national level institution in Ghana can coordinate the large and increasingly diverse number of conclusions and recommendations on education, health, transportation etc., formulated within the ECOWAS integration scheme.

1.6 Theoretical Framework

The functionalist perspective, also called functionalism, is one of the major theoretical perspectives in sociology. It has its origins in the works of Emile Durkheim, who was especially interested in how social order is possible or how society remains relatively stable. Functionalism interprets each part of society in terms of how it contributes to the stability of the whole society. Society is more than the sum of its parts; rather, each part of society is functional for the stability of the whole society. The different parts are primarily the institutions of society, each of which is organized to fill different needs and each of which has particular consequences for the form and shape of society. The parts all depend on each other.

For example, the government, or state, provides education for the children of the family, which in turn pays taxes on which the state depends to keep itself running. The family is dependent upon the school to help children grow up to have good jobs so that they can raise and support their own families. In the process, the children become law-abiding, taxpaying citizens, who in turn support the state. If all goes well, the parts of society produce order, stability, and productivity. If all does not go well, the parts of society then must adapt to recapture a new order, stability, and productivity.
Neo-functionalism emphasizes the consensus and order that exist in the community, focusing on the stability of the bloc. From this perspective, disorganization in the system, such as deviant behavior, leads to change because societal components must adjust to achieve stability. When one part of the system is not working or is dysfunctional, it affects all other parts and creates social problems, which leads to social change.

The neo-functionalist believes that progress in international economic and social cooperation is a prerequisite for the elimination of political conflicts and war. According to them, as cooperation expands to cover different spheres of activities, conflicts between governments are reduced which would eventually lead to a reduction in individual dependence on the state. The emergence of the neo-functionalism, which was a direct result of the establishment of the United Nations (UN), was a response to the need to relate and apply functionalist ideas to the integration experiences of Western Europe and other regions including Africa. This resulted in the changing of some of the ideas engendered in functionalism in several areas. Neo-functionalism explains integration as a situation where nation states surrender their sovereignty to a central political power to act in their interest. However, countries feel subjected to some form of dictatorship when they cede power to this central power to act in their interests, and this is a disincentive to the integration process. Additionally, whereas the supranational concentration of power is explainable in terms of national interests, neo-functionalists stress that nation states themselves have an array of goals, which conflict with the goals of the new political centre. The neo-functionalist analysis of integration however fails to acknowledge the role of non-state actors, who may influence the integration process.

Two main reasons inform the adoption of the functionalist approach to integration for the research. First, functionalist cooperation traces its roots to the colonial era. For economic
reasons, in the English, French and Portuguese empires, sub-regional structures were set up in various economic and non-economic sectors. A typical example was in East Africa where the British set up the East African Community with shared services in major sectors and an established headquarters to coordinate the socio-economic activities of the then three colonies. This demonstrated the spirit of an economic integration approach to and methodology for organizing cooperation to have long-standing implications for the post-colonial era. Second, according to D. Rothchild, it is argued that this approach better lent itself to a reconciliation of such concerns as the need to protect national sovereignty and at the same time engage in international cooperation to promote development. Other methods such as integration by force, integration by coercive manipulation, integration by impulse or integration by irredentist appeal would have tampered in one way or another with the sacred principles of non-interference in the internal affairs of states and with the idea of territorial integrity. For this reason functionalism is the ideal course to follow in the study of regional integration in the West African sub-region as it gives a good theoretical explanation for the formation of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in 1975. However, in a situation where West Africa is lagging behind in terms of development and given that the member states hold back their national sovereignty, it would mean that the functionalist approach would not better explain the integration process.

The functionalist perspective achieved its greatest popularity among American sociologists in the 1940s and 1950s. While European functionalists originally focused on explaining the inner workings of social order, American functionalists focused on discovering the functions of human behavior. Among these American functionalist sociologists is Robert K. Merton, who divided human functions into two types: manifest functions, which are intentional and obvious, and latent functions, which are unintentional and not obvious. The manifest
function of attending a church or synagogue, for instance, is to worship as part of a religious Community, but its latent function may be to help members learn to discern personal from institutional values. With common sense, manifest functions become easily apparent. Yet this is not necessarily the case for latent functions, which often demand a sociological approach to be revealed.

Gabriel Almond and Bingham Powell introduced the structural-functionalist approach to compare political systems. They opined that a political system is better understood with respect to the functions of its institutions, while stressing that the institutions must be dynamic in context. This initiative has gone contrary to comparative politics as it views all political systems as the same. However the structural-functional approach rests on the notion that political systems have various components including “interest groups, political parties and branches of government”. Further criticisms have been leveled at functionalism by proponents of other social theories, particularly conflict theorists, Marxists, feminists and postmodernists. Conflict theorists criticised functionalism's concept of systems as giving far too much weight to integration and consensus, and neglecting independence and conflict.

In conclusion, as the functionalist theory can be discussed in various forms, the clarification above can be adequate to give a flavor to the various nuances underlying the theory. Neo-functionalism could therefore be relevant to explaining states in the realm of integration. Although, the problem of the state to cede power to a central power to act on its interest, has also been explained by other integration theories, the neo-functional theory also offer a good explanation on the subject matter. In this regard, the neo-functionalism could be trusted to explain the challenges of integration in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)
1.7 Literature Review

One of the vital issues in African regional integration, which has severely hindered the process of regionalism, is the capacity challenges of the national institutional structures responsible for managing the integration process. It is, therefore, necessary to establish the reasons for the disappointing results of ECOWAS’ economic integration process, despite the continuous rhetoric about the need for regionalism in West Africa. A multiplicity of challenges as discussed below would seem to have played a significant role in the poor record of the ECOWAS integration process.

The challenges run from the decision-making at the Community level to the national level.

According to Thomas V. Greer, among the basic challenges to the integration process in ECOWAS, perhaps the most vital, is the strain between Anglophone and Francophone states in the sub-region. The Francophone-Anglophone issue is owed to the differing colonial institutions, legal heritages and business practices as well as the influence of France, unlike Britain, on her colonies.

According to Vladimir Antwi-Danso, the West African Monetary Union (UEMOA) and ECOWAS dichotomy has hindered the ECOWAS initiative ahead. This has sometimes led to the duplication of economic unions created to accomplish the same objectives. Neo-colonialism, attributed to the French and British, has been more prevalent in West Africa than in most parts of the world.

France opposed the creation of ECOWAS, because it reasoned that a large regional organization would allow its former colonies more political and economic independence.

Greer argues that the colonial masters still exert some form of influence on their colonies to the degree that they manipulate their decisions on integrating with the other countries in the
Initiatives like the creation of the single monetary union of the francophone countries, the CFA, remains, one of the major challenges to the integration process as the sub-region hopes to achieve a monetary union. The activities of the colonial masters cause divisions in the Community and make member states more aligned to them than to the sub-region. The result is that, decision making by the Community on integration is difficult. Greer perhaps describes the most obvious challenge to the integration process in the West African sub-region. This is because colonial masters have affected decision making of the Community since the initiative towards integration in the 1970s.

Additionally, according to Mohammed Mubarik, there is also the challenge of political commitment among West African states. Mubarik argues that, there appears to be a lack of special interest in support and lack of total commitment on the part of the ECOWAS members to the cherished goals of the Community. He asserts that the level of involvement and participation of member states in the Community’s activities leaves much to be desired. Edward Amissah adds that ECOWAS decision and policies aimed at fostering integration, have mostly received little ratification by member states making implementation of the Community policies difficult. What Mubarik is saying is that ECOWAS member states have been demonstrating their lack of interest in the integration process through a lack of commitment. In most ECOWAS countries, policies and programmes aimed at strengthening integration are not accorded the same priority in the development objectives of member states as national issues. The result is that member countries develop their own strategies, plans and priorities, with regional cooperation hardly reflecting in them.

Another challenge worth noting is the problem of the approach to the integration process. To this, Afua Yakohene postulates that bearing in mind that integration is a definite obligation
for the advancement of the developmental kismet of an endowed continent, West African leaders will need to abolish the propensity to self-destruct through the destabilisation of domestic governance systems of each member state, as manifested throughout its history.\textsuperscript{53} A sustained democratic governance system at the domestic level will give the needed platform for the promotion of a sustainable integration process.\textsuperscript{54} Yakohene is articulating the fact that the changes in governance patterns of the individual states affects the approach to integration, as various governments come with different objectives, which slows down the integration agenda, for it is always difficult to align their ideas of integration to that of their successors. S.K.B. Asante also states that, the market approach adopted by ECOWAS focuses on the removal of trade and non-tariff barriers, which creates the perception that integration is all about trade and investment, the weakness in the model however lies in the focus on trade liberalization as the main instrument of integration.\textsuperscript{55}

Furthermore, Edward Amissah Nunoo, stated in his dissertation that, the institutions of the Community are able to effectively carry out their responsibilities largely due to the resources at their disposal. Regrettably these resources – financial, material and human – are always inadequate to the Community institutions, rendering them incapable.\textsuperscript{56} Member states should, therefore, cultivate the habit of making timely contributions of resources to the Community institutions to aid their activities.\textsuperscript{57} With regards to the issue of funding, Edward Amissah is ensuing that the funding of ECOWAS programmes has been a long-standing challenge to the member states. The Community, from its inception, decided that its programmes and projects would be funded through member’s contribution. This has failed as members have either refused to pay their contributions on time or, on occasions, refused to pay altogether.
Abubakar M. Sambo, adds in his article that the low literacy rate in the Community is another serious problem. This problem has adverse consequences on the relationship between the Community, corporate, and legal institutions, as well as traders in the sub-region. Sambo explains that the literacy level of the people in the Community is so low that they lack understanding of the integration process. Asante also explains that the quality of staff in the ECOWAS institutions is generally low as they are mostly appointed on political basis rather than on the basis of their competence. The question that emerges from Sambo’s assertion is that: how do you embark on a course that is not understood by the beneficiaries?

Furthermore, the institutions of ECOWAS also bring their own challenges to bear. For instance, Asante argues that ECOWAS has undertaken, in response to global and regional developments, far-reaching structural transformations, including the adoption of the Vision 2020 with a Strategic Action Plan to transform the Community from an “ECOWAS of States” into an “ECOWAS of People”. Against this background, the current national units would appear too small in capacity to effectively meet the capacity challenges of deepening ECOWAS integration process at the national level. The purpose of this research is to investigate this issue in Ghana and make suggestions based on the findings.

Taking all these challenges into consideration, one challenge that is yet to be mentioned is the inadequate ECOWAS national units to coordinate and implement the large and increasingly diverse conclusions and recommendations formulated within the ECOWAS integration scheme. This challenge therefore informs the purpose of this research.
1.8 Sources of Data and Methodology

The main sources of data for this academic exercise are primary and secondary. Library materials and archival materials are of utmost significance. The sources of the secondary data were official ECOWAS documents, journals, papers, books. There was also data from primary sources mainly interviews with Mr. Bonaventure Adjavor, The Head of The ECOWAS Bureau of Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration of Ghana(MFA & RI), Mr. Abdul Rashid Inusah, Former Assistant Director of the ECOWAS Bureau MFA & RI, Research Department, Frederick Boakye Dankwa, Senior Research Officer, African and Regional Integration Bureau MFA. These persons were chosen because of their expertise on the subject of regional integration. They were therefore chosen for purposes of expert of interviews.

1.9 Arrangements of Chapters

Chapter One - Research Design

Chapter two – History and process of Regional Integration in ECOWAS

Chapter Three – Case Study of Ghana and ECOWAS and Analysis of data.

Chapter Four- Recommendations and conclusions
END NOTES

4 ECOWAS History. See http://globaledge.msu.edu/trade-blocs/ecowas/history
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56 Amissah, Edward op. cit., p. 31
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OVERVIEW OF THE ECOWAS INTEGRATION PROCESS

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the history of regional integration in West Africa is traced from the pre-colonial era to present. Mention is also made of a few of the numerous regional groupings which existed in West Africa before the inception of ECOWAS. This is necessary because the history of regional integration in West Africa is incomplete unless it encompasses other sub-regional groupings which have existed within the time frame above. Even though ECOWAS is the dominant integration arrangement in the whole of West Africa (encompassing all sixteen countries) it has been cited here (for the purposes of this chapter) as one of the sub-regional groupings. The West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU or UEMOA) is also mentioned here as one of the regional economic groupings to adequately deal with the challenges of integration in ECOWAS.

Furthermore the levels of integration mentioned in this chapter are to serve as a standard of measure for the integration process of the community. This is to help determine the level attained by the Community. The study will then provide an overview of managing the integration process at the national level.

2.1 History of Regional Integration in West Africa

Regional economic ties in Africa have had a long history owing to the long distance trade which exited throughout Africa even before the advent of the Europeans. With the coming of European colonialism, economic activities of many kinds including trade, finance, monetary affairs, administrative responsibilities, transport and communication network were organized on a
regional basis during the colonial period, including the monetary unions between the francophone countries and France.\(^1\) During this era (colonial period), each colonial authority used to bind occupied territories together under one central administration, merely for convenience. This resulted in the creation of common services and common money issuing boards, the adoption of common practices such as free movement of people also proved useful in this context.\(^2\)

Africa’s integration dates back to the pre-colonial era. The Manchester (Pan Africanist) Conference of 1945 spelt out indetail, the need for African unity. The period of the independence struggle was marked by pan-Africanist activities which lead to the formation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) to demonstrate African leader’s desire for integration. Actualities such as the end of the Breton Woods system of fixed-but-adjustable exchange rate regime, oil price shocks of 1973/74 and 1979, declining economies, mounting debts, and continued shortfalls in export receipts, forced African leaders to think more of integration in the second decade of independence.\(^3\) This resulted in the surfacing of the East African Community (EAC), the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC), ECOWAS among others.\(^4\)

In the early 1960s, African states began to form loose political organizations, such as the Monrovia and Brazzaville groups, primarily inspired by the ideological orientation of the member states. In 1963, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) was created to include all African countries. After the formation of the OAU, Monrovia and Brazzaville groups were dissolved, and no further sub- regional organizations based primarily on shared ideological orientations or political goals were established.\(^5\) Regional cooperation among African governments thereafter centered primarily on achieving common economic objectives.\(^6\) Of the several experiments in regional economic integration among sub-Saharan African states, the
most ambitious and progressive is the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). ECOWAS was officially established in 1975. A number of events preceded the signing of the ECOWAS treaty. Former Liberian President, William Tubman, was first to conceive the idea of a West African economic community, which stimulated the signing of an agreement between Cote d’Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone on February 1965. This did not go far.

General Gowon of Nigeria and General Eyadema of Togo reignited the idea in April 1972. They travelled to 12 countries in West Africa to elicit support. The generals drafted proposals for the treaty which were examined at a meeting of potential member states in Lomé, Togo, on December 1973; at a meeting of experts and jurists in Accra, Ghana, on January 1974; and at another meeting of ministers in Monrovia, Liberia, on January 1975.

Finally, on May 28, 1975, fifteen West African countries met in Lagos, Nigeria, to sign the ECOWAS Treaty, also known as the Treaty of Lagos. Cape Verde became the sixteenth member of ECOWAS two years later, in 1977. The ECOWAS treaty intended to promote cooperation and integration within West Africa and to eventually establish an economic and monetary union.

The sixteen ECOWAS member states signed a revised treaty on July 24, 1993, to include all community conventions, protocols, decisions, and resolutions made in the 1975 treaty, apart from those that were incompatible with the revised treaty. The revised treaty defined two basic goals of accelerating the integration of economic policy and improving political cooperation. Mauritania withdrew from ECOWAS because of conflicting opinions on some of the decisions that were made, bringing the number of membership to fifteen.
In addition, while the governing institutions within ECOWAS have changed over the years, the revised treaty designated eight institutions: the Authority of Heads of State and Government, the Council of Ministers; the 115-member Community Parliament; the Economic and Social Council; the Community Court of Justice; the Executive Secretariat; the Fund for Cooperation, Compensation, and Development; and Specialized Technical Commissions. With each institution tasked with certain duties and delegated a specified degree of power, the Authority of Heads of State and Government is however the highest institution.

2.2 Regional Groupings in the West African Sub-Region

Geo-politically, the West African sub-region consists of sixteen countries, including ten former French colonies, four British colonies, one Portuguese and one Spanish. Ahmad A.H.M. Aly states that the former French colonies have been the most active group in the sub-region and in the continent as a whole, in terms of economic cooperation. Below are some of the blocs that were formed within the West African sub-region.

2.2.1 The West African Economic Community (CEAO)

Formed in 1972 the group comprises Benin, Burkina Faso, La Cote d’Ivoire, Mali, Mauritania and Niger. It aims to foster economic and social development of its member states.

2.2.2 The Mano River Union (MRU)

Established in 1973, the group consist of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone constitute the membership of the MRU. Its objectives are to expand reciprocal trade by eliminating existing barriers, to promote cooperation for the expansion of international trade, to create conditions
favourable to expanding the production capacity of the area (including the progressive
development of a common productive policy and cooperation in the creation of new productive
capacity), and to ensure a fair distribution of the benefits of economic cooperation.\textsuperscript{24}

\subsection{The Senegambian Confederation}

The group exited from 1981-1989 and as the name indicates, Senegal and Gambia are the only
members of this confederation. The Senegambia confederation agreement of December 1981
provides for, among other things, the development of an economic union that has a simple
custom union and monetary union within member states.\textsuperscript{25}

\subsection{Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)}

The treaty establishing ECOWAS was signed in Lagos on 28\textsuperscript{th} May, 1975 and became effective
in June 1975 when the required number of countries ratified it. The community encompassed
sixteen countries with the membership comprising eight French, six English and two Portuguese-
speaking countries. The broad objectives of ECOWAS as contained in Article two of the treaty
envisaged the promotion of:

\begin{quote}
cooperation and development in virtually all fields of economic activity, particularly in the
fields of industry, transport, telecommunication, energy, agriculture, natural resources,
commerce, monetary and financial questions, and social and cultural matters, for the
purpose of raising the standard of living of its people, of increasing and maintaining
economic stability, of fostering closer relations among its members and contributing to the
progress and development of the African continent.\textsuperscript{26}
\end{quote}

\subsection{West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU Or UEMOA)}

In late 1993, France and the leaders of the seven West African states comprising the West
African Monetary Union signed the treaty establishing UEMOA.\textsuperscript{27} This was a culmination of two
separate arrangements, namely, the West African Monetary Union (UEMOA) and the Community of the West African States (CEAO) into a new treaty, the Economic and Monetary Union of West African States (UEMOA) that in turn will be anchored by France. The agreement brings within a single framework the West African Economic Community, which has attempted (ineffectually) to remove barriers to trade and the West African Monetary Union, which supports a common central bank and currency (CFA) linked to a fixed (and recently devalued) rate to the French franc.

2.3 Levels of Economic Integration

This refers to the different strategies adopted in pursuance of economic integration. For an economic bloc to attain a full-fledged integration it would have to go through five stages of economic cooperation from the least integrated to most integrated, they are a free trade area, a customs union, a common market, an economic union and finally a full political union.

Even though some practitioners see it as a progression from one level to another, a level is understood to mean a completely different stage of integration which could be identified and adopted without necessarily moving from the first to the end. The levels of integration throw more light on the structure of the work and serve as a bridge for launching into the process of integration in West Africa.

2.4 Process of Economic Integration in West Africa

The following questions are pertinent to the understanding of the process of economic integration in West Africa:

- What steps or decisions have been taken to ensure the success of ECOWAS?
• How has ECOWAS discharged its obligations towards the full realization of the
spirit of the ECOWAS treaty?

The answers to these questions are linked with significant issues in relation to the
dealings of ECOWAS as discussed below.

2.4.1 Free Movement of Persons

For reasons of national security, public order and protection of the labour market, most West
African countries had been operating expatriate quota schemes and imposing entry visa
requirements. One of the first achievements of ECOWAS was to adopt a protocol that made
possible the free movement of community citizens throughout the region.32

2.4.2 Regional Infrastructural Networks

The free and smooth movement of persons, goods and services depends on effective physical
cohesion. ECOWAS therefore made the development of regional infrastructural networks an
early priority. On the pan-African highway plan, ECOWAS adopted a regional road programme
– the Trans-West African: consisting of the Trans-coastal highway from Lagos to Nouakchou,
and the Trans-Sahelian Highway from Dakar to N’Djamena. 33

2.4.3 Telecommunications

In the field of telecommunications, an African infrastructural plan (PANAFTEL) was adopted by
ECOWAS to develop a regional telecommunications network (INTELCOM I) in West Africa, to
established a system of telephone, telex and telefax communications between all the sixteen
capitals. INTELCOM II is being planned to modernize and expand the existing network and ensure its interconnectivity with the fast evolving super telecommunications highways.

2.4.4 Promoting Regional Interactions

The colonial past, linguistic and cultural differences and past independence nationalism had all combined to make most West African countries live without the necessary regional interaction. If a viable and integrated West African community is to exist, such barriers must be broken. Conscious effort has been made to build the necessary social and economic bridges, particularly among the business community. The organised private sector of member states has been encouraged to interact across borders through the West African Enterprise Network (WAEN).

2.4.5 Promoting Cross Border Investment (CBI)

In order to promote CBI, ECOWAS has been encouraging the establishment of regional projects through the provisions of necessary political support and developing appropriate regional mechanisms to contribute to the share capital. In this regard, ECOWAS supported the efforts of the Federation of West African Chambers of Commerce to set up the first private sector regional bank, the ECOBANK Transnational Incorporated with its Headquarters in Lome, Togo and with branches in eleven countries.

2.4.6 Monetary and Financial Integration

The need to form a monetary union in West Africa culminated in the adoption of the ECOWAS monetary cooperation programme in 1987, this intended to achieve, in the medium term and
long-terms, the convertibility of West African currency by the year 2020, to provide member states the opportunity to.\textsuperscript{37}

For this reason ECOWAS member states agreed in 2000 to launch the single currency (ECO) campaign, to include all member countries until 2020. To that end, the authorities took some measures including; the establishment of both, the West African Monetary Institute (WAMI) and the Stabilisation and Cooperation Fund (SCF), as well as the ratification of the protocols on the creation of a West African Monetary Zone (WAMZ) and a West African Central Bank (WACB).\textsuperscript{38}

2.4.7 Regional Peace and Security

There cannot be economic and social integration and development without political stability and peace. ECOWAS member countries have undertaken a number of initiatives to safeguard and consolidate relations conducive to the maintenance of peace, stability and security within the sub-region. This has recently been reinforced by the adoption of a protocol relating to the mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, Peace keeping and Security.\textsuperscript{39}

It is worth noting that the ECOWAS Treaty did not mention conflict management and prevention, among its aims and objectives. However efforts to ensure peace in the sub-region have given the sub-region, worldwide recognition. The formation of the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) is one initiative that has drawn attention to the community.\textsuperscript{40} In 1999, ECOWAS also initiated the conflict prevention and management enterprise, the adoption of Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peace Keeping and Security.\textsuperscript{41} The community also adopted the Protocol on Democracy and Good
Governance, in December 2001, as a veritable instrument for promoting peace and security in West Africa.\textsuperscript{42}

2.4.8 Trade Liberalization

The ECOWAS Trade Liberalisation Scheme (ETLS) envisages the following measures:

- Consolidation of customs duties and charges of equivalent effect;
- Immediate liberalization of all customs duties on unprocessed goods and traditional handicrafts;
- Liberalisation of Tariffs on approved industrial goods i.e. 0\% rate of duty; and
- The establishment of a common external tariff (CET) to be applied to third countries\textsuperscript{43}.

The following decisions have been taken in relation to the ETLS under the Ghana/Nigeria Fast Track approach:

- A list of approved industrial products were to be published and made available to all customs entry points for the application of the 0\% rate of duty by 15\textsuperscript{th} April, 2000;
- Exemption from certificate of origin requirement of raw agricultural products of community origin;
- Harmonisation of any minimum documentation requirements of goods valued at $500 or below;
- ECOWAS Common External Tariff (CET) to come into effect by 1\textsuperscript{st} January, 2001;
- Application of Community levy of 0.5\%;
- Harmonisation of VAT rate; and
- Immediate application of the Inter-State Road Transit Protocol.\textsuperscript{44}
2.4.9 ECOWAS Anthem

An ECOWAS anthem has been adopted and was played at the last ECOWAS summit held at Abuja in the year 2000.\textsuperscript{45}

2.5 Managing Regional Integration at the National Level

Regional integration refers to collaboration between countries within a particular geographical area, in the form of trade, investment, infrastructural development as well as fiscal and monetary policies to ensure stability and sustainable economic growth and development among others in the integrating area.\textsuperscript{46}

Constitutionalism is fundamental to the regional integration process, since it guarantees the political, economic and social stability needed to pursue long-term regional projects.\textsuperscript{47} It also assists the fractional transfer of state sovereignty to the central regional institution in order to prevent states from undermining the integration process.\textsuperscript{48} This is because activities at the national level have an inverse relationship at the regional level.\textsuperscript{49}

In West Africa, in order to support regional integration, ECOWAS has set up a number of protocols that cover a wide range of areas of cooperation including economic, trade and industrial policy, free movement, right of residence and establishment among member states.\textsuperscript{50} A case in point is the ECOWAS Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, Residence and Establishment that was espoused in Dakar, Senegal on 29 May 1979.\textsuperscript{51} While these protocols provide a legal and institutional framework for higher and deeper levels of regional integration, many challenges still exist, not to mention the implementation and enforcement of ECOWAS decisions and policies contained in the protocols at the national level.\textsuperscript{52}
However to meet the objectives of the 1975 ECOWAS treaty, it was necessary at the time that, the near absence of any national level institutional provision to handle the ECOWAS protocols, to set up National Units within the government machinery to serve as entry points for ECOWAS initiatives within members states to implement regional integration programmes outlined in the protocols and Acts of the community institutions.\textsuperscript{53}

To this end the authority by recommendation C/REC.1/11/82, established the ECOWAS National Unit in November 1982 to facilitate the participation of ECOWAS member states in the integration process.\textsuperscript{54} But disturbingly, the 1982 ECOWAS recommendation could not hold as it failed to provide the following:

- A manual of proceedings, guidelines or principles on the operation of the National Units
- Institutional structures and roles of the Unit
- Locations within the government machinery and
- Specific functions and resources required for effective implementation of their mandate.\textsuperscript{55}

This has resulted in member states having to design their own units and functions, structures and locations of their National Units.\textsuperscript{56} For instance, while some countries have functions assigned directly to them, others like Cote d’ivoire and Nigeria have their functioned derived from the ministries of which they are a constituent part.\textsuperscript{57} Also, whereas in Nigeria the functions are stated in general terms, in others like Guinea Bissau they stated in terms vague enough to undermine the work of the ECOWAS National Unit.\textsuperscript{58}

Furthermore, these lapses have resulted in wide ranging institutional and managerial capacity challenges which have contributed to ineffectiveness and inefficiency, not only the location keeps changing from one ministry to another, but in other countries, more than one ministry serves as the focal point or national unit for ECOWAS affairs, thus creating
coordination difficulties which are also made worse by overlapping memberships.\textsuperscript{59} There were even countries where the National Units existed formally until in 200 when it was formally established.\textsuperscript{60}

Apparently, the 1982 recommendations did not also make provisions for the creation of specific units to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the community projects and programmes to link the regional and national level institutions.\textsuperscript{61} There was also a decision by the Authority of Heads of States and government in 1983 to authorize a unit to be set up at the ECOWAS secretariat, which was reiterated by both the June 1988 and April 2002 meetings of the ECOWAS National Units, which was not also implemented.\textsuperscript{62} Additionally, in November 2010, a new regulation C/REG.24/11/10 on guiding principles on the operation of the National Units was launched and is still under implementation by a couple of Member States.\textsuperscript{63} Discussed below is analysis of how some countries in ECOWAS manage integration at the National level.

\textbf{2.5.1 The National level Unit}

Following the decision by the Authority of Heads of States and governments for countries to set up ECOWAS national units, all the countries in the bloc now have units to deal with ECOWAS issues in their respective countries. However, the names and arrangements of the units differ from one country to the other.\textsuperscript{64} For instance, in the case of Nigeria the national unit is established as a department under a ministry just like Benin and Senegal. The Togo and Gambia established their national unit as a desk of a section, while the rest of the countries in the community established their national unit as a division of a department in a Ministry. The arrangements of the units are of essence as it determines its relevance to the state.\textsuperscript{65}
Whilst the national units of countries such as Benin and Togo are found in their economic ministries, in the case of Senegal, it is located in the ministry of foreign affairs and in Nigeria it is located in the ministry for African integration. In the event that, the ministries are core to the governments, the national units are usually secondary to major activities. For example, all the UEMOA member states have their national units located in their ministry of finance to oversee the Central Bank for West Africa which has always been attached to the ministry.\(^6^6\) And the African Union is usually put under the ministry of foreign Affairs or African integration in their respective countries. In practice, the capacity of the national units determines the ECOWAS integration programme at a particular time. But it is observed that most countries clearly spell out the role of their national units.\(^5^7\)

**TABLE 1.2 STRUCTURE OF NATIONAL UNITS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Nigeria</th>
<th>Benin</th>
<th>Senegal</th>
<th>Togo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Human</td>
<td>6 professionals with minimum of 10 years experience against 11 indicated in establishment 10 support staff</td>
<td>12 professionals (min. 10 years experience) 8 support staff</td>
<td>1 professional. i.e Director 2 support staff</td>
<td>3 professionals 5 support staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Material</td>
<td>N/A No internet facility</td>
<td>12 computers 1 electric typewriters 2 photocopiers 3 international tel. lines 2 local tel. lines</td>
<td>1 computer 1 electric typewriters 1 photocopiers 2 international tel. lines 2 local tel. lines</td>
<td>1 computer 1 electric typewriters 1 photocopiers Internet facility partly operational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>financial</td>
<td>Government budget indicating 2003, N60 million for capital programme. And 70 million for current, less than 5% had been released in the last preceding years.</td>
<td>2003-CFA 980 million 2004-CFA mainly from ECOWAS subversions but exceed 5% levy grant</td>
<td>2004-CFA 5.7 million. i.e. 20% government budget</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the table above, Benin has the highest staff with 12 and Senegal has the least number with 1. Meanwhile Benin Senegal adds to Benin and Nigeria as among the highest performers in the bloc. Nigeria has the highest establishments of 12 with 6 professionals on board because the staffing falls within the ambit of national policies with reshuffling of personnel in the civil service in general; a consequence of staffing the unit with irregular workers whose conditions of service depends on the government. The educational level in most countries is quiet impressive, mostly with university graduates, but this may not be the case in the ECOWAS units.\(^6\)\(^8\) Also the ECOWAS national units lack material resources to facilitate their work. Nigeria meanwhile does not have Communication facilities which are most essential. Financial resources are also a change in most of the national units, the state finances most of the programmes, and mostly payments are delayed.\(^6\)\(^9\)

Owing to the multifaceted nature of the ECOWAS programmes, there is the need to ensure effective coordination with the sectoral ministries to ensure the success of the integration process. Normally there is supposed to be five structure namely focal points in the ministries, inter-ministerial coordination committees, intra-sectoral implementing bodies, national monitoring bodies and multi-sectoral coordinating bodies.\(^7\)\(^0\) However, no country within the bloc has these structures except to have focal points, desks and individuals in charge of ECOWAS affairs. Nigeria has meanwhile formerly designated those structures in each ministry.\(^7\)\(^1\)

### 2.6 Conclusion

Integration in West Africa has a chequered history. Regional groupings within the sub-region floundered, mainly because they lacked the institutional props and political commitment needed
to nurture them. The first most serious attempt made by countries of the sub-region towards integrating their economies was in 1975 when ECOWAS was born.

The various methods adopted by ECOWAS since its inception, bear eloquent testimony to the will of member countries to succeed in their integration drive. With the success of some of these methods, the prospects of integration in West Africa are good. The examination of the prospects therefore need not be overemphasised. This equally calls for an analysis of the existing problems and a diversion of attention on the emerging problems.
END NOTES

2 Ibid. 11
4 Ibid. 73.
6 Ibid.
7 Ibid.
8 “Global Edge”. 20th June, 2014. See http://globaledge.msu.edu/trade-blocs/ecowas/history
9 Ibid.
10 Ibid.
11 Ibid.
12 These fifteen countries were Benin, Burkina Faso (then known as Upper Volta), Cote d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo.
13 “Global Edge” op. cit.
14 Ibid.
15 Ibid.
16 Ibid.
17 Ibid.
18 Ibid.
19 Ibid.
20 Ibid.
21 Amissah, Edward, op. cit, p. 50.
22 Aly, Ahmed AHM, “op. cit., p. 11
23 Amissah, Edward, op. cit., p. 51.
24 Ibid, p. 54.
26 Ibid, p. 31.
27 Ibid, p.61
28 Ibid.
29 Ibid.
30 Ibid., p.62.
31 Ibid.
33 Ibid, pp.66-68.
34 Ibid, p. 68.
36 Ibid, p.69.
38 Ibid, p.3.
39 Amissah, Edward, op. cit., p. 70.
41 Ibid.
42 Ibid.
43 Amissah, Edward, op. cit., p.71.
44 Ibid.
45 Ibid.

CHAPTER THREE

CHALLENGES OF GHANA IN THE ECOWAS INTEGRATION PROCESS

3.0 Introduction

The ECOWAS national level institutions otherwise known as the focal point is responsible for administering ECOWAS resolutions in member states, to promote cooperation and sustainable development. Unfortunately, the fragility of most member states coupled with endemic poverty perpetuated by decades of political misrule seems to have hampered the realizations of key objectives of the community. In recent times, issues of national level institutions has become of utmost concern so far as the objectives of the community are concerned. S.K.B Asante also writes that, member states have been faced with the problem of managing ECOWAS activities at the national level.¹ The assertion by Asante is as relevant today as it was since the birth of the ECOWAS treaty in 1975.

One contending challenges to the integration process in ECOWAS is the capacity of the ECOWAS National Unit to coordinate the large and increasingly diverse number of conclusions and recommendations formulated within the ECOWAS integration scheme. The current challenges confronting ECOWAS are diverse, numerous and cut across socio-economic and political spheres. They include lack of political commitment, a lack of approach to the integration process, finance, illiteracy, different colonial masters etc.²

Asante indicated that evidence abound to establish that inadequate national level institutions have the potential to undermine the ability of the community to meet its objectives.³ He continued that what is more disturbing is that the unit responsible for ECOWAS activities in Ghana, like in other member states, has demonstrated its incapacity to implement the large and
increasingly diverse protocols designed within the ECOWAS scheme. It is in light of the challenges posed to the national level institutions of member states that the ECOWAS integration process seems to be facing several legal and implementation challenges.

This chapter will therefore provide an overview of Ghana in the ECOWAS integration process and subsequently examine the nexus between the identified challenges and the ECOWAS integration process. It further discusses the emerging challenges posted by the inadequate national level institutions, and their implications for the ECOWAS integration process. Finally, it examines the government’s strategic response and plans to make the ECOWAS national unit adequate.

3.1 An Overview of Ghana in the ECOWAS Integration Process

West Africa and Africa in general, have always been the focus of Ghana's foreign policy. Ghana's efforts at integrating with the other West African countries have mostly been trusted on economic motives. The pattern has, however, changed over time, due to the foreign policies, leadership style, existing socio-economic and political conditions, and the nature of the international system. With regional integration at the heart of Ghana’s foreign policy according to the constitution, this part of the study gives a brief overview of how Ghana has pursued the regional integration agenda before and after independence.

Prior to independence, West African Nations including Ghana, Mali, Togo, Burkina Faso, Cote d’Ivoire and Benin, experienced some form of integration which facilitated trade and movement of resources. This integration was mainly brought about by the Volta River which connected the nations of the Southern territories to the major historical Trans-Sahara trade route in the North. This resulted in not only trading activities between the West African nations, but
also strategic integrations of various goals that guided their independent socio-economic and cultural development.\textsuperscript{10}

This was followed by nationalist and pan Africanist activities in the sub-region, towards attaining independence. It is important to note that “the Gold Coast started life as part of the integrated British possessions in West Africa with its headquarters in Sierra Leone”.\textsuperscript{11} The integration of British territories within West Africa was led by Joseph Ephraim Casely-Hayford, a Ghanaian politician, with support from the giants of the Pan-African Movement such as Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois.\textsuperscript{12} The National Congress of British West African States (NCBWA) was launched in Accra by Casely-Hayford in 1920, with the aim of organizing intellectuals and elites of British West Africa to meet and discuss the aspirations of the people with the British government.\textsuperscript{13}

However, owing to factors such as the slave trade, competition amongst colonial masters and the Cold War between the United States of America (USA) and the Union Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) at the time of independence, Ghana decided to use its foreign policy to enlarge its influence and gain recognition in the light of an integration agenda.\textsuperscript{14} Ghana's first President, Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, of the Convention People's Party (CPP), laid the foundation of Ghana's foreign policy, which influenced the quest to integrate as follows;

- The emancipation of Africa from colonialism and restoration of the dignity of the black race;
- The establishment of power and influence in Africa;
- The pursuit of world peace and security through a policy of positive neutrality and non-alignment and;
The promotion of international cooperation and development through such intergovernmental organisations as the United Nations (UN), the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and the Commonwealth.\textsuperscript{15}

These four principles have influenced Ghana’s foreign policies since 1957, though every regime has had its interests aligned to the leader’s perception of the prevailing internal and external conditions.\textsuperscript{16} The afore-mentioned is a reflection of Dr. Nkrumah’s ideals as a president, as he was committed to securing freedom for Africans.\textsuperscript{17}

From Nkrumah’s overthrow in 1966 to the beginning of the Fourth Republic in 1993, the country was marked by political instability. The leaders of the regimes after Nkrumah followed in his idea of national interest though in different ways, based on their ideologies.\textsuperscript{18} Over the period, the leaders did little to facilitate regional integration in comparison to Nkrumah, and Pan-Africanism was displaced by nationalism while Ghana’s relations with her neighbours deteriorated.\textsuperscript{19} However, when the National Redemption Council (NRC) came to power under the leadership of Gen. I. K. Acheampong in 1972, the NRC tried to repair the broken relations between Ghana and her neighbours, and as a result, Ghana became one of the first countries to ratify the ECOWAS treaty in 1975.\textsuperscript{20} Gen Acheampong was overthrown in 1978 and from that period to 1993, Ghana was marked again by political instability with successive governments.\textsuperscript{21}

Ghana recommitted to regional integration upon returning to democratic rule in the fourth republic, under the leadership of Ft. Lt. J.J. Rawlings.\textsuperscript{22} The relatively stable economy at the time created an opportunity for Ghana to lead the regional integration drive.\textsuperscript{23} This was evident in the Ghana-Nigeria Fast track approach which was adopted to accelerate the pace of the integration process.\textsuperscript{24} Former Ghanaian presidents J.J Rawlings and John A. Kufuor, also made history at certain periods, when they served as ECOWAS chairman, not to mention the ex-President of the
ECOWAS Commission, Dr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas. 25 To further demonstrate Ghana's commitment to integration, the country became the first country to be peer reviewed under the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) which was designed to ensure adherence to New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD), this became the antecedent to the integration process as Ghana's integration process is institution based.26 Ghana’s president John Mahama also became chairman of ECOWAS in March 2014.

3.2 Challenges of Ghana’s ECOWAS National Level Unit and its Linkage with the Integration Process

By contextualizing the capacity of Ghana’s ECOWAS National Unit to implement the large and increasingly diverse conclusions and recommendations formulated within the ECOWAS integration scheme. It is important to explain that, the multifaceted nature of the ECOWAS integration process which covers a wide range of areas including social, political, economic, and cultural of member states, describes how broad in scope the ECOWAS integration process is. It is therefore expected that, the activities of ECOWAS’ national level units of member states should embrace all facets of the ECOWAS integration process to be able to serve as the focal point of ECOWAS resolutions, in other to effectively execute ECOWAS agendas within member states.

Neo-functionalism construes each component of bloc with regards to its efforts to the stability of the whole community.27 Society is more than the sum of its parts; rather, each part of society is functional for the stability of the whole society.28 The different parts are primarily the institutions of society, each of which is organized to fill different needs and each of which has particular consequences for the form and shape of society.29 This means that the integration process has a very broad scope and each member of the community functions for the stability of
the whole community, and failure on the part of a member state, is a failure for the entire community.\textsuperscript{30} This, however, tasks each member state to operate within its capacity to ensure the success of the integration process. The capacity of the member states meanwhile rests with the national units.

It is important to highlight the nexus between ECOWAS integration process and the inadequacy of the national level units. This is against the backdrop of integration process has suffered many challenges because of the inadequacy of the national units, to implement the large and increasingly diverse conclusions and recommendations formulated within the ECOWAS integration scheme. This development has become a stumbling block for the ECOWAS integration process.

Ghana is one of the attractive countries in the community because of her democratic credentials compared to social unrest, conflicts and political turmoil in some countries within the sub-region. Conversely, just like the other members of the community, Ghana is also struggling to effectively drive the ECOWAS course because of the capacity her ECOWAS national unit to coordinate ECOWAS resolutions. It was observed from data gathered that the lack of knowledge and awareness about the integration process, lack of funds, the type of approach to the integration process, lack of political will, and lack of coordination between government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and ECOWAS institutions, constitute the major challenges to the integration process.\textsuperscript{31} Also observed from information gathered were measures put in place to monitor and regulate activities of ECOWAS in Ghana, to ensure the successful execution of ECOWAS resolutions.\textsuperscript{32} It came out that Ghana, like other ECOWAS countries, had signed the treaty whiles being conscious of her national sovereignty.\textsuperscript{33} According to Antwi-Danso, since independence, Ghana has been the vanguard of the integration process.\textsuperscript{34} However,
that has been done without endangering the national integrity and the stability of the country. In recent times, most countries seek to protect their national integrity, and as a result, they pay less attention to the integration process.

The challenges faced by the ECOWAS national units to fully execute the ECOWAS integration process are closely linked and varied, but a few of the most pressing ones have been discussed below to put the issue in context. This is not to understate the efficacy or potency of the other challenges and threats not discussed. Some of the challenges threatening the ECOWAS national unit in Ghana in relation to the integration process are the different colonial masters; lack of political commitment; the type of approach to the integration process; lack of clear policy to guide source of funding; inadequate education; and low coordination between ECOWAS institutions and national units.

3.2.1 Different Colonial Masters

Many years before ECOWAS, West African countries had traded among themselves without formal residency protocols. The ECOWAS treaty came into force and abolished barriers to trade among West African countries and other protocols that guided their relations. The treaty was supposed to halt the rift caused by conflicting ideologies that the English, French and the Portuguese administration brought to the sub-region. These colonial administrations formed the basis for exchanges within the community.

The relations that Great Britain, Portugal and France, have since maintained with their former colonies in the community have affected member states from committing themselves fully to ECOWAS. Their dealings with their colonies have brought among other things mis-
governance, which is a feature of the political leadership in West Africa, and it is the results of ECOWAS incapability to achieve its goal.\textsuperscript{41}

The United Kingdom (UK)’s relations with Ghana, affects Ghana’s participation in the ECOWAS integration process to some extent and the ECOWAS national level unit for that matter. According to the interviews conducted, issues relating to ECOWAS integration always come next to Ghana’s relations with the UK, in the list of priorities for development.\textsuperscript{42} Additionally, decisions that concern ECOWAS would have to be forced to conform to the standards of relations between Ghana and the UK, or be rejected.\textsuperscript{43} For example, it was gathered from the interview that Ghana teamed up with Nigeria to embark on the Fast Track Approach to establish the West African Monetary Zone (WAMZ) in Ghana in 2003.\textsuperscript{44} The idea of the initiative was largely influenced by the British, since it was targeting only English speaking countries in the community.\textsuperscript{45} In Ghana, this concept was treated as a national issue rather than a responsibility of the ECOWAS bureau of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) which did not even exist.\textsuperscript{46} According to the interview the government at the time took advantage of it, to better her relations with the other Anglophone states in the sub-region.\textsuperscript{47}

Additionally, it came out from the interviews that Ghana’s former president John Agyekum Kufuor, secured a deal between Ghana and the UK during his visit to the UK in September 2008.\textsuperscript{48} The deal was signed by the then Ghanaian Minister for Finance and Economic Planning, Mr. Kwawdo Baah Wiredu and the UK Secretary of State for International Development, Mr. Douglas Alexander.\textsuperscript{49} Under the agreement, the UK gave Ghana 250 million pounds between 2008 and 2010 to facilitate development and capacity building in various sectors of the economy including health and education.\textsuperscript{50} This targeted the Millennium Development Goals and poverty reduction. During that period, ECOWAS was at the negotiation table with the
European Union on the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA). Nevertheless, the agreement with the UK attracted the government’s attention more than the EPA negotiation, since the deal with UK brought direct benefits to the state. Even more so, the EPA negotiation, became the sole responsibility of the government to the neglect of the ECOWAS national unit, which at the time was just one of the bureaus of the MFA.

It is, therefore, prudent to state that, Ghana’s dealings with Britain, puts considerable strain on the relationship between Ghana and ECOWAS and this invariably leads to undue pressure on the discharge of ECOWAS duties, to facilitate the integration process. The result is that, government’s confidence in the ECOWAS integration process may be threatened and this can make it hard for the community to reach its goals.

3.2.2 Political Commitment

ECOWAS has battled with the unwillingness of leaders of member states to realize the importance of the integration process and to cede part of their national authority to a central body. This has resulted in non implemented protocols. That is to say that the ECOWAS integration process has been affected by the lack of political will of member states to cede their sovereignty. We could therefore say that previous Ghanaian governments of have dealt with integration in different ways, usually influenced by the leader’s ideology and the prevailing conditions in Ghana and the sub-region.

Ghana’s involvement in ECOWAS has been possible, owing to the 1992 constitution, which mandates Ghana to adhere strictly to the principles enshrined in any treaty to which Ghana is signatory. Moreover, with reference to Ghana’s history in the ECOWAS integration process as stated above, Ghana’s participation has been consistent since the ECOWAS treaty was signed
in 1975.\textsuperscript{58} Meanwhile at the national level, the ECOWAS bureau at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which is supposed to be the unit in charge of ECOWAS affairs in Ghana, is only one of the sections under the MFA.\textsuperscript{59} According to information gathered, the Bureau on its own, lacks the initiative to direct the Ghana government to respond to ECOWAS calls unless it does that through the MFA or otherwise.\textsuperscript{60} He adds that, the government’s involvement in the ECOWAS course, has always been its own initiative.\textsuperscript{61}

Additionally, the various MDAs are mostly made to attend and oversee ECOWAS initiatives that pertain to their outfits.\textsuperscript{62} These MDAs mostly report directly to the president to score political points and mostly leave the ECOWAS bureau uninformed about developments, making monitoring difficult for the bureau.\textsuperscript{63}

Furthermore, Ghana’s lack of political commitment is worsened by the awareness of the additional demands by certain initiatives of the integration process that discourage the country from committing herself to the integration process.\textsuperscript{64} For instance, the implementation of the West African Monetary Zone (WAMZ) will deny the country some sovereignty in the conduct of monetary policy and the control of import revenue.\textsuperscript{65} However, the country cannot afford to take that chance, since a significant proportion of its revenue, is derived from indirect taxes in the form of export and import duties.\textsuperscript{66}

To highlight the effect that the lack of political commitment will have on the integration process, Antwi-Danso posits that, the changes in the integration orientation with successive governments into the national agenda, is a demonstration of unwillingness to participate in the integration process.\textsuperscript{67} The different political ideology cause discontinuity of ECOWAS initiatives and slows down the integration process.\textsuperscript{68} As a result, the ECOWAS protocols are usually left in
the hands of some ministers of state or civil servants, and the rest of the government and people of the country are left out.69

3.2.3 Approach to the Integration Process

ECOWAS adopted the European Union’s (EU) approach to integration, where the EU transformed from an economic into a political union as it made adjustments to its original protocol.70 The Treaty of Rome in 1960 established a common market, a customs union and common policies in the EU.71 Originally, ECOWAS set up eight technical committees including Trade, Customs, Statistics, Taxation, Money and Payments, which appeared perfect for its primary aim of encouraging trade among ECOWAS member countries.72 Additionally, a technical committee, political, judicial and legal affairs, regional security and immigration, was subsequently established to cater for the political and legal changes, as well as the immigration challenges which the sub-region faced.73

Then later on, like the EU decision to capitalize on the 1992 Maastricht Treaty to avert new challenges that could emerge such as a monetary union and citizenship, ECOWAS also adjusted their treaty in 1993 to make economic and political cooperation, as well as a common market and a single currency among member as major economic objectives.74 Due to changes in government since the ECOWAS treaty was signed in 1975, the name of the Ministry has had to change several times to suit a particular government’s orientation towards ECOWAS integration.75 With successive governments, the name had changed in the following ways: it was called the ministry of Planning and Regional Economic Co-Operation and Integration in 1997, from 1997-2001 it was called the Foreign Ministry and in 2000 it was called the Ministry of Regional Integration and Cooperation. The NPP government in 2001 also changed the name of
the ministry to the Ministry of Economic Planning and Regional Cooperation (MEPRC).\(^76\) It changed to the Ministry of Regional Cooperation and NEPAD in 2003, and then in 2007 the name was changed back to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Cooperation and NEPAD and finally changed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration in 2009.\(^77\)

Meanwhile, the country never had an ECOWAS national level unit since the ECOWAS treaty was signed in 1975 until when the ECOWAS bureau was created to oversee ECOWAS affairs in Ghana in 2009.\(^78\) The implication is that, previous governments have had to address ECOWAS integration mostly according to their ideology and the prevailing conditions at the time, this resulted in inadequate monitoring of ECOWAS activities in the country.\(^79\) The approach to the integration has in that case varied from regime after regime as can be seen in the history above.\(^80\) The focus of the MFA is not on development and integration, but rather on consular and external relations with foreign countries beyond West Africa.\(^81\) The diplomatic personnel are handicapped in handling integration issues and particularly the officers have career expectation of being posted abroad, and thus pay less attention to integration.\(^82\)

Moreover, given the broad scope of the ECOWAS programmes and the limited capacity of the ECOWAS bureau, it is difficult for the bureau to direct the approach to integration in the country.\(^83\) For instance, the adoption of Vision 2020, which comes with a strategic action plan to change the community from an ECOWAS of states to an ECOWAS of people, will become too broad in scope, since it is multifaceted, for the ECOWAS bureau at the MFA, to meet the capacity challenges of such deepening ECOWAS integration initiative, at the national level.\(^84\) It was observed during the interviews that the challenge of approach to the integration process also gives way to other challenges like funding, lack of political commitment, the colonial influence, education and a host of challenges that affects the integration process.\(^85\)
There is still a low recognition of regional integration as a priority within the state’s affairs, despite the active role of the Government of Ghana in the ECOWAS integration process.\textsuperscript{86} This is a reflection of the manner in which integration has been affected in every ministerial reshuffle or the change in government to some extent.\textsuperscript{87} Furthermore, ECOWAS is viewed as an elitist venture undertaken by political leaders without consultation with the public, who are the direct beneficiaries of ECOWAS programmes.\textsuperscript{88} ECOWAS integration has invariably been imposed on the people without their consent, because the governments have assumed that the ECOWAS objectives are in the national interest.\textsuperscript{89} Additionally, in Ghana, regional integration is only an extra activity for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the lead ministry, and it is not given its due attention.\textsuperscript{90}

3.2.4 Lack of Clear Policy to Fund ECOWAS Programmes

To enhance the integration process as well as to better the quality of lives of the people within the community, it is essential to have an accelerated development through increase in investment.\textsuperscript{91} One way to achieve this is by the contribution of resources by member states to make funds readily available to execute ECOWAS programmes.\textsuperscript{92} For many years Ghana has allocated the responsibility of regionalism and ECOWAS integration to a generally little known, poorly-resourced low-level EU-ACP-ECOWAS secretariat at the Ministry of Finance.\textsuperscript{93} There is no evidence of the country designing its national plans and budget or visions like the Vision 2020, to be consistent with the promotion of effective integration for development.\textsuperscript{94}

In practice, since the ECOWAS Bureau of MFA is a section under the ministry, its cost transactions are added to the budget of the whole ministry, for the government’s attention, and out of this, ECOWAS programmes are financed\textsuperscript{95}. In other words the Ministry controls the
funding of ECOWAS integration programmes and projects. However, the Ministry faces a challenge of having to monitor funding of other ECOWAS activities that fall under the other MDA’s who take charge of these activities. This is another situation of an inadequate ECOWAS national level unit, since its scope is not broad enough to be able to control the finances of the ECOWAS programme.

In sum, ECOWAS programmes and projects are financed in two major ways, one is the fact that the ECOWAS Bureau draws a budget and adds to the budget of the Ministry for the government’s attention and secondly through a percentage of the contributions by member states of ECOWAS. It is very important to draw the link between the lack of clear policy to fund ECOWAS programmes and the integration process. It was observed during the interviews that revenue collection mechanisms have to be sustained to ensure the transparency of transactions. The challenge is to develop comprehensive measures to strengthen and broaden revenue mobilization among member states.

According to information gathered, the lack of clear policy to fund ECOWAS programmes deprives especially the private sector, of some opportunity to also engage in the ECOWAS integration process. This is because everything is concentrated in the hands of the political leaders. The challenge therefore is to make funds accessible to the private sector to also engage them in the integration process. It also came out during the interview that there is the need to regulate the flow of funds that are channeled to ECOWAS projects and programmes. This is because there is always misappropriation of funds since there is no unit to regulate the disbursement of funds. These raise questions as to how a particular programme should be financed. Additionally, the differences in tax systems, regulations, and differences in
laws among members states affect the medium they follow to commit funds to ECOWAS projects and programmes.107

3.2.5 Lack of Education for Integration Officers and Beneficiaries

Education as a factor of the integration process is given eminence in the Lagos Plan of Action (LPA) which highlighted human resource development and utilization as a priority area.108 The LPA advocates for harmonisation of educational policies and funding for education among member states.109

Though trade and economics are the main focus of the integration process, education is instrumental in transmitting the values and ideals of resolutions, to the people to accelerate the integration in the sub-region.110 Since integration involves everyone including the leaders, the process requires the development of appropriate tactics at the national level to cater for the bigger motives of the sub-region.111 This is to serve as the medium for the realisation of the aims and objectives of integration process.112

During the interviews it was observed some senior officials of MFA has little experience in the area of integration, an evidence of the lack of competent staff to drive the integration process.113 Additionally, to further prove the lack of competent staff to manage the integration process, usually the staff of the ministry are deployed to the various bureaus without reference to their respective disciplines, and sometimes National Service Personnel are posted to work in the ECOWAS bureau under the Ministry, without prior knowledge about integration.114 This is a challenge because the increasingly large and diverse number of ECOWAS resolutions needs highly skilled personnel with knowledge of integration to take over the affairs. This leaves the bureau to be inadequate in the quality and number of integration staff.115
On its part, the bureau usually attempts to organize meetings with the heads of District Assemblies across the nation to sensitise them on the benefits of ECOWAS integration to ensure that the people better understands integration and become the owners and administrators of ECOWAS programmes and projects. Additionally, the citizens are supposed to be the beneficiaries of ECOWAS programmes but because the bureau has not been sensitising citizens about the importance of the ECOWAS integration process, just a few are aware of the ECOWAS programmes and that makes implementation difficult.

The problem of competent staff is compounded by ignorance on the part of public officials including police, customs, immigration personal and others at border posts that display knowledge-gap about, and frustrate the integration process. The link between the challenge of education and the integration process is that the integration process cannot be successful when the leaders and the masses of people, who are the beneficiaries, donot understand the concept and what it entails. According to information gathered, the political leaders and the people at the grassroots have not properly understood the ECOWAS integration process. “In many countries, the concept of integration is not influenced by the wishes of the people or in response to the felt needs of the leadership, but rather from a feeling of belonging to a 'club' by the leadership”. In Ghana, apart from Kwame Nkrumah of the First Republic, participation in integration activities has always been the duty of the government officials.

### 3.2.6 Coordination Between the ECOWAS National Unit and the MDAs

Integration as a component of foreign policy cannot be the sole responsibility of the political leaders in government. The political leaders only have a duty to ratify international agreements and define the laws that guides the conduct of foreign policy. In Ghana, treaties and
international agreements are integrated into domestic law through an Act of Parliament (Article 75(2), 1992 Constitution). This is an indication that, agreements require legislative ratification before they can be implemented. Therefore, collaboration between the Executive and its related institutions in pursuing foreign policy objectives is very important.

When there is an ECOWAS initiative, the ECOWAS Bureau usually assigns the initiative to the appropriate MDAs, whose responsibilities fall within the ambit of that ECOWAS development, for the outfit to execute and report back to the bureau. Due to internal political reasons, the MDAs do not always want to abandon their own work schedules and take on additional responsibilities and even sometimes absorb the ECOWAs schedule and treat it as their own schedule thereby, causing conflicting responsibilities. In most cases, they give priority to their own job schedules rather than that of the community, because they are accountable to the government. But because of the limited capacity ECOWAS bureau of MFA, monitoring is sometimes difficult.

Additionally, regional cooperation structures are not adequately staffed, and at times not even available. The staffing authority levels, backgrounds, and qualification of the few personnel are below what is required to facilitate the integration process. It came out during the interviews that there is no consultative body such as the National Commission for Cooperation on Integration Issues, which is composed of government representatives and socio-economic associations like the Association of Ghanaian Industries (AGI) to deliberate and offer advise on major issues of interest to the bloc. There is also the lack of consultation with Ghanaian economic operators like the enterprise sector, on especially trade related issues. For that reason, the sector doesn’t normally take part in the selection of products to be considered for ECOWAS preferential treatment and the drafting of trade liberalization programmes.
complains that integration is a political project and that the private sector has not been consulted for its inputs into the integration process.  

Unlike its counterparts in other ECOWAS countries, the Ghanaian MFA has a weaker ability as a central coordinating body for national development, mainly because of its traditional foreign policy orientation outside the African continent. The Ministry doesn’t pay attention to policies of the integration scheme which affects the domestic arena, as it does for foreign policies usually outside of the community. To relate the challenge of coordination between the ECOWAS national unit and the MDAs, the interviews indicated that some agencies such as the Customs Excise and Preventive Service (CEPS), are affiliated to separate ministries and as such their operations are difficult to monitor.

Furthermore, there is also some form of friction between the agencies, even though it appears as if they relate well to each other. This always leads to conflicts which affect the execution of ECOWAS duties and the integration process at large. Additionally, some of the ECOWAS protocols, conflicts with national standards and the Agencies are left to resolve such conflicts instead of the ECOWAS bureau. For example, the Ghana Police Service (GPS) has been struggling to reconcile the ECOWAS road regulation of 14 feet, which encroached on the 11 feet in the Ghanaian law. Ghanaian drivers were forced to adjust to that of ECOWAS or face arrest.

3.3 Emerging Challenges From the Inadequate ECOWAS National Level Institutions, and their Implications for the ECOWAS Integration Process in Ghana

The essence of managing integration at the national level has evolved in relations to development around the world. The accelerated growth in development and population within the Sub-region has necessitated a more nation-centred approach to the integration process. However,
enormous challenges exist and routinely confront the member states in the effective management of the integration process.\textsuperscript{145} Therefore, member states needs to be at their full capacity in other to contain the challenges that emerge.\textsuperscript{146} This is because challenges might further worsen the level of the government’s commitment to the integration process; Other emerging challenges include irregular contributions to the ECOWAS funds as well as misappropriation of the ECOWAS funds; the concept of integration will continuously fall in the hands of civil servants; integration might not also be well understood by both the leaders and the people of the country; there could also not be a clearly defined policy to guide the integration approach.\textsuperscript{147}

3.4 State Interventions

Bonaventure explained that the Government has instituted some measures to ensure the management of the ECOWAS integration process by the ECOWAS Bureau through the MFA. In response to new and emerging threats to the integration process, he said the government organizes workshops to sensitise the officers of the ECOWAS Bureau to educate them on the importance of integration.\textsuperscript{148}

Furthermore the Bureau is tasked with compiling reports concerning ECOWAS that come from the various MDAs.\textsuperscript{149} The bureau also decides which MDA to be assigned a particular ECOWAS programme.\textsuperscript{150} The bureau is also charged with communicating and coordinating with the various stake-holders to seek assistance on how to run ECOWAS programmes.\textsuperscript{151}
3.5 Conclusion

From the arguments advanced, it is concluded that:

- The national level units of ECOWAS are inadequate to coordinate the large and increasingly diverse number of conclusions and recommendation formulated within the integration scheme.

- The national level units of ECOWAS are not adequate to coordinate the large and increasingly diverse number of conclusions and recommendation formulated within the integration scheme.

The data show that ECOWAS recommendations and resolutions such as the vision 2020 out-weigh the capacity of the ECOWAS Bureau of the MFA. The evidence also shows that, the ECOWAS National Unit in Ghana is not in the best capacity to effectively coordinate the large and increasingly diverse conclusions and recommendations of the community. This is because the evolving nature of the approach to the integration process, is multifaceted in nature and goes far beyond the responsibilities of the ECOWAS Bureau of the MFA; it can also be attributed to globalization which affects every aspect of the world; it could also be linked to growth in population of the community.

In addition, the theoretical frame work further sets the stage to help answer the research question, by explaining how Ghana as a component of the ECOWAS integration process, should act in order to ensure the success of the process. It explains that each country must be at their fullest capacity to facilitate the integration process. It also explains that, integration requires the countries to cede some power to the central body, to act in their interest. According to the evidence stated above, this assertion is always difficult because, there is always challenge for countries to cede power to a central to act in their interests. This leads to the conflicting of
responsibilities between the government and the unit in charge of the ECOWAS duties in the country.

The theory also provided the basis to explain the reasons why the government will not agree to cede some power to ECOWAS to act in the country’s interest, and also how some of these reasons are way beyond the capacity of what is regarded as the ECOWAS national unit, charged with the responsibility to oversee ECOWAS programmes in the country. The result of this is the fact that the whole integration process lacks direction and this affects the pace as well as slows down the integration process.

On this note, the theory has set the stage to help answer the research questions that, for the integration process to thrive well, the national level units should be the focal point to coordinate the large and increasingly diverse recommendations and conclusions of ECOWAS within the country. Therefore, the ECOWAS national unit is the most important institution to handle ECOWAS integration affairs in the country.
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CHAPTER FOUR

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Summary of Findings

This chapter is the concluding part of the research which was set out to determine the extent to which the institutions set up at the national level are inadequate in the coordination and implementation of the large and increasingly diverse number of conclusions and recommendations formulated within the ECOWAS integration scheme, to ensure the sustainability of the integration process. It was guided by the hypothesis that, the national level units of ECOWAS are inadequate to coordinate the large and increasingly diverse number of conclusions and recommendation formulated within the integration scheme. The study focused on the capacity of the ECOWAS national level units to coordinate the large and increasingly diverse number of conclusions and recommendations formulated within the ECOWAS integration scheme. Data and other relevant information were obtained from official sources through interviews and interaction with officials from mainly the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration (MFA & RI) as well as officers whose activities and duties have direct bearing on the research topic. The chapter concludes that the ECOWAS national Unit, for that matter the ECOWAS Bureau of the MFA, is inadequate to manage ECOWAS activities. Finally the study proposes some recommendations for consideration to help address the inadequacy of the National Units.
4.2 Findings

The West African sub-region has a big market potential for development. ECOWAS was therefore established in 1975 owing to the significance of regional integration, to promote economic growth and development of the countries in the sub-region. After thirty eight (38) years of existence, ECOWAS has undertaken several cooperation and integration programmes in various key sectors of the sub regional economy, particularly in the areas of trade promotion and liberalization, provision of better roads and telecommunications, Infrastructural development, growth in agriculture, industry and energy sectors.\(^1\) According to the research, these initiatives have had minimal impact as a result of the inadequacy of the ECOWAS National Units to coordinate and implement the large and increasingly diverse number of protocols and recommendations designed under the integration scheme. This is because the ECOWAS national units are supposed to serve as the link between ECOWAS citizens of a country and the community institutions.\(^2\) The research highlighted some of the challenges that hinder the ECOWAS integration process.

The research found out that the lack of adequate ECOWAS national level units, undermine the ability of states to effectively coordinate and implement the large and increasingly diverse number of recommendations and conclusions designed within the ECOWAS scheme, to facilitate the integration process. The potential impact is that, the integration process is held back and doesn’t seem to make progress. To this end, the ECOWAS national level units have become essential for ensuring the success of the integration process.

The inadequacy of the ECOWAS National Units has been beset with problems that hinder the ECOWAS integration process. It was observed that there is lack of dynamic leadership and proper functioning of inter-agency coordination, and imperfect monitoring of
implementation, there have been no essential, well-structured competent institutions and managerial skills for implementation of the various ECOWAS protocols and regulations. For instance, for many years, Ghana has allocated the responsibilities of regionalism to a generally little known, poorly-resourced low-level EU-ACP-ECOWAS secretariat at the Ministry of Finance. It came out that there is no evidence of the country designing its national plans, budgets or visions such as the vision 2020, to be consistent with the promotion of effective integration for development. The ECOWAS national Unit in Ghana is inadequately staffed for the task of implementing a regional integration scheme that will benefit Ghana. The staffing, authority level, backgrounds and qualifications of personnel tend to be below what is required to make it effective. There is also no consultative body such as the National Commission for Cooperation and Integration (NCCI) for permanent consultation of all issues with regards to integration. Unlike the SADC, there is no ministerial coordination committee to provide regional policy inputs at the national level.

Another observation was the lack of public participation in the affairs of the bloc especially regarding the establishment of protocols and their implementation. With regard to the integration process, the study observed that many Ghanaians were not adequately informed about the integration process, an indication of lack of adequate sensitisation of the ECOWAS agenda. Some Ghanaians residing in border towns are skeptical and opposed to controls at the borders and so continue to evolve evasive measures to avoid detection by security officials. This clearly shows the lack of understanding between policy makers and the citizenry who are the ultimate beneficiaries. Public education of the protocol and its inherent benefits to the general populace would help eliminate citizens’ misgivings about the intension of the integration process.
The study observed that since the ECOWAS Bureau came under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, not much has been heard about ECOWAS affairs as projects at the ECOWAS institutional levels reports and conclusions of which have been scarcely disseminated or shared with the relevant ministries departments and agencies to have them reflected in their respective sector developments plans. The merger is not only interpreted as Ghana’s lack of faith in the integration process but also an erosion of Ghana’s image as a sustained advocate of pan-Africanism. It also does not give enough high profile recognition to the seriousness of Ghana’s commitment to the integration process, hence the difficulty for the country to also benefit from the community. Interviews conducted during the research revealed that there seem to be in existence plans and strategies to enhance the sensitization of ECOWAS programmes in the MFA. But efforts to administer them have always proved futile sometimes the personnel to administer the programmes are not well informed about the integration process.

Furthermore, the study found out that political interferences coupled with diverse integration ideologies by successive governments have destabilised the focus of the ECOWAS integration process over the years. This causes discontinuity of ECOWAS initiatives started at the sub-regional level. It also brings confusions as to which development agenda is the responsibility of ECOWAS and that for the government. These issues have the ability of undermining the performance of the ECOWAS National Units and also affect the success of the integration process. It came out that, as a result of local politics, issues of ECOWAS integration always comes next to government initiatives, and sometimes integration is not even considered. It was also observed that, the various ministries, agencies and departments to which ECOWAS programmes are assigned, normally treats the ECOWAS programmes as their responsibility just to score political points from their leaders, thereby relegating the ECOWAS national units. In
some cases the government itself takes charge of ECOWAS duties and pursues it as its own initiative just to gain confidence from the citizenry whom they serve.

Funding was another area which exposed the inadequacy of the ECOWAS National Unit to implement the large and increasingly diverse protocols and programmes designed under the ECOWAS scheme. It was observed that, there is no clear policy at the national level to guide the funding of projects and programmes of the integration process. It was observed that through the interviews that, the ECOWAS Bureau source funds mainly from government budget through the MFA or sometimes from the ECOWAS funds that are allotted to each member state to support projects and programme. Additionally, it was also observed that sometimes when the ECOWAS programme is assigned to a particular ministry department or agency, that outfit funds the project or programme. The result of this is the fact that there is always misappropriation of government funds as the source of funds is not clear, there is sometimes too much funds channeled to a single project and at other times there are no funds for certain projects as the source of funds for project becomes difficult to determine. It was also observed that in cases where the funds comes through the government budget of the MFA, it’s mostly insufficient to support the integration process, because the budgeting is done by the accountant of the MFA who doesn’t sometimes consult the ECOWAS bureau to get accurate figures for the integration process. In a related observation that came out during interviews. It came out that, Ghana just like any other member state, evades the periodic contribution to the bloc simply because the ECOWAS bureau lacks the authority to direct and ensure that the country honour’s its contribution obligations.

It also came out that, there is poor coordination between the ECOWAS National Unit and the other Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDA). Due to the lack of authority by the ECOWAS Bureau of the MFA as stated above, it is mostly difficult to monitor and evaluate the
performance of the various MDAs with regards to their participation in the ECOWAS integration process. This situation is further compounded by the absence of well outlined programme structure by the National Units, to guide the execution of ECOWAS programmes in the country. The attendant loss of focus of the ECOWAS initiatives and lack of responsibility of ECOWAS programmes compels member states to adopt measures that may seem inimical to the provisions in various ECOWAS programmes. The situation in Ghana is not different. The political setting in Ghana makes every ruling government to want to work closely with its MDAs, thereby making it difficult for the opposition and any external body to influence the government and its MDAs activities. The case of the government of Ghana dominating every agenda in the country came up several times during the research. What worsened the situation and perhaps the challenge to ECOWAS National Unit in coordinating the activities of the MDAs to execute ECOWAS programmes is the pressure on the government and its MDAs to deliver. This makes them put every other agenda as a secondary matter. It was revealed that the various MDA’s do not respond to ECOWAS calls, and in the unlikely event that they do, they turn to politicize it. The lack of proper coordination could therefore be traced to some these factors.

The ECOWAS National Level Unit faces a peculiar challenge of resources to aid the integration process. The inadequate resources have been a characteristic feature of the National Units, and therefore has a spillover effect on every activity undertaken by the National Units. The inadequate resources ranges from human resource, materials, structures and any other thing that could help facilitate the integration Process. What worsens the situation is the establishment of the ECOWAS bureau as another bureau under the MFA which in itself faces the same problem in a broader sense. It was revealed during the research that, the ECOWAS Bureau for most of the time lacks certain resources needed to carry out its duties, besides the inadequate
staff, lack of integration staff with the requisite knowledge to run the integration process in the country, there has also been lack of an essential structure to represent an ultra-Modern office, with the required accessories like furniture, and other office accessories to facilitate the documentation of activities in relation to the integration process

4.3 Conclusion

The research seeks to determine the extent to which the institutions set up at the national level are inadequate in the coordination and implementation of the large and increasingly diverse number of conclusions and recommendations formulated within the ECOWAS integration scheme. It was realized that the failure of most ECOWAS members to manage the integration process laid in their apprehension of the challenges that the national units are faced with. Challenges such as inadequate staff, knowledge of the integration process, political commitment, lack of resources, clear policy to fund programmes, clear policy on integration process among other are issues that undermine ECOWAS National Units efforts at full Implementation of ECOWAS programmes. Finally, it is the position of this research that any attempt to address the challenges without reference to the needs of member states will hit a snag.

4.4 Recommendations

Against this background, to effectively respond to the multiplicity of capacity challenges in managing the ECOWAS integration process at the national level, the concern for enhancing national performance capacity building should no longer be focused on the national units which, as strongly highlighted above, has become anachronistic in the deepening integration process of the community. Rather, it has become increasingly necessary for an essential well-structured
national coordinating body, specifically, a dynamic, central and institutional mechanism, to be established within the government machinery at the national level to handle integration issues, whether regional or continental in scope. Such an ECOWAS central body should have coordination and facilitation as its core role, both at cabinet level with a powerful ECOWAS minister for effective coordination and at technical level headed by a very senior manager. The coordinating machinery should be endowed with adequate capacity to monitor, facilitate and support sector initiated activities.

The ECOWAS central and coordinating body should be backed by legal or legislative instrument. It should have recognition through adoption of formal national measure and given appropriate backing to its establishment and the right to operate and access public assets or resources. Institutionally, it should be an operational body or entity as part of the government or national machinery and responsive to organizational structure. At the technical level, it should have human resource endowment, among other things, with the necessary power to access and participate effectively in the government machinery to attain results or make the desired impact at the levels of the government hierarchy.

The ultimate objective of the ECOWAS coordinating mechanism is to make the necessary efforts at both the regional and national levels to make ECOWAS an everyday reality in the life of the community citizen. This entails first, meeting the challenge of achieving regional integration as a national priority, second, providing the framework for national development policy and third, getting all principal national economic actors actively engaged in the integration process. These are the critical questions which have dogged the ECOWAS integration initiative since its inception. What is ultimately required is to make ECOWAS the centre of attraction and driving force behind every government department and agency. This
would bring about a sense of ownership and involvement which could be cultivated within the business community, if the private sector is invited as equal partners to participate in national discourse and regional programme implementation.

As regional integration is a multi-sectoral process, effective functioning of the ECOWAS central coordinating body critically depends on the level of interactions or links established with the various sector ministries on sectoral issues to ensure that all aspects of ECOWAS programme implementation are taken care off. This is because a greater part of ECOWAS programmes has sectoral components. It is extremely necessary, therefore, that, the central coordinating institutional mechanism should reactivate the functioning of sector Programme committees, it is by such means that ECOWAS can get each socio-economic government department to identify with and be focused on the regional dimension of its development strategy. The sector ministry would thus identify with the relevant regional policy or program as the basis for formulating national priorities, hence the need to build upon the recent practice of close and frequent involvement of a number of sector ministries in some communities’ programmes. Cases in point include the ministries of energy (West African power pool and the West African gas pipeline), minister of agriculture (regional agricultural policy and investment programs, regional food security), ministers of education (ECOWAS educational policy), ministers of trade (EPA and WTO negotiations) and ministers of finance (multilateral surveillance mechanisms). This direct participation by the relevant governments fosters strong ownerships of regional initiatives at the national level and enhances the chances of program implementation.

To this may be added a new dimension to the collaboration between and national bodies which relates to encouragement of an active participation of the private sector and civil society in the regional integration process. Regional cooperation and integration is not just a matter for
national governments and international organisations. It cannot be imposed from but must be a
need felt and supported by the general public, strong non-governmental participation is a key
factor in achieving the goals of regionalism. Successful cooperation or integration schemes in
Europe and elsewhere have not been the work of government alone. They have benefited from
active participation by a wide variety of groups such as unions, employer’s organisations and
private entrepreneurs and these groups ensured that regional integration issues remained at the
top of the political and economic agendas. The degree of participation by civil society can
therefore be seen as a barometer to gauge the penetration and real effects of regional integration
and cooperation measures.

Therefore, the integration of the West African region demands the participation of all key
stakeholders. West African and their grassroots organisations must fully participate in all major
decision making. Every effort should be made to mobilize institutional capacities to promote
grassroots participation in policy formulation, implementation and evaluation. Popular
participation would undoubtedly enhance accountability and citizen’s ownership of the
programme. In following this path, the experience of the European Union, the Latin American
Integration Association (ALADI) and the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) in
involving regional business community in trade cooperation activities could be of benefit to
ECOWAS. In the case of ASEAN, for example, the business community is invited to participate
in ASEAN’S dialogue with its major development cooperation partners on trade and economic
cooperation.

Thus beyond actions on policy, infrastructure and institutions lies a more fundamental
need to mobilize the media, educational and cultural institutions to promote the concept that
cooperation within Africa is likely to enhance the progress of all west African societies. Indeed,
at the national level, the realization of the “ECOWAS of the people” slogan can be accelerated if conscious effort is made to have very close involvement of economic operators and their professional organisations in policy making machinery at both regional and national levels. The value of civil society organisations and business sector participation in the process of regional integration has still not been sufficiently appreciated and exploited.

Besides, to enable the ECOWAS specialized agencies such as WAHO, WAMA, GIABA, EGDC and other community institutions EBID, parliament, Court of Justice to have a desirable impact at the national level, a viable relationship (direct or indirect) should be developed between these bodies and the ECOWAS central coordinating mechanism in the member countries. As part of the ECOWAS integration process at the national level much of the business of the ECOWAS specialized agencies and community institutions should be made known to the national authorities, monitored and facilitated by the central national coordination institution. In other words, the central coordination institution should have a role to play in the transactions of specialized agencies and institutions at the national level. Indeed, their activities at the national level could be enhanced if properly programmed and funded through access to the community retained levy.

There is also the need to develop relations between the ECOWAS central national institution and the non-socio economic ECOWAS agenda, democracy and good political governance, regional peace and security, which have been vibrant and evolving community activity programmes run jointly by the relevant ECOWAS departments and the national political/defence/security ministries. It would be desirable for the ECOWAS central national coordinating body to monitor aspects of their programmes. This should particularly be in order, in the case of democracy and good political governance programme, where as many as 9 out 15
ECOWAS countries have acceded to the ground breaking initiative of NEPAD, the African peer review mechanism (APRM). Already, the 9 APRM countries, as at October 2010, decided at the first sub regional conference on the APRM held, in Accra -Ghana from the 18-20th October to establish a west African centre for the advancement of the APRM (WACCA) with a considerably added value for the ECOWAS integration process.

Thus on the whole, building institutional capacities to manage regional cooperation and integration at the national level must entail or cover all the above mentioned areas of the activity, creating strong interministerial committees, encouraging business community and civil society organizations to participate in regional integration process, establishing beneficial relationship with and monitoring transactions of the ECOWAS specialized agencies and community institutions at the national level and above all, getting every government institution involved and making ECOWAS an everyday reality I the ordinary community citizen.

All this tends to raise a crucial and extremely important question. Where should the ECOWAS central coordinating institutional mechanism with such voluminous, wide ranging and diverse responsibilities and functions be appropriately located within the government machinery to make ECOWAS viable with adequate capacity to formulate policies and to coordinate community decisions with other bodies? Can it be fittingly and rewardingly located in a department, directorate, a section or unit of a ministry to effectively undertake these enormous functions and responsibilities?
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